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Special Political and Decolonization Committee (Fourth Committee)

Summary record of the 6th meeting
Held at Headquarters, New York, on Tuesday, 11 October 2005, at 10 a.m.

Chairman: Mr. Aliyev ..... (Azerbaijan)

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05-54308 (E)

The meeting was called to order at 10.10 a.m.

Expression of sympathy in connection with the recent earthquakes in Pakistan and Afghanistan

1. **The Chairman**, on behalf of all the members of the Committee, expressed sympathy to the Governments of Pakistan and Afghanistan in connection with the recent earthquakes in their countries.

2. **Mr. Ahmad** (Pakistan) expressed his country's deep appreciation for the kind words of sympathy and compassion following Pakistan's great loss caused by the recent earthquakes. The expressions of sympathy and the offers of support from the United Nations system and the international community at large had strengthened the resolve and fortitude of the people of Pakistan to brave the great tragedy.

Expression of sympathy in connection with the recent flooding and mudslides in Guatemala

3. **The Chairman**, on behalf of all the members of the Committee, expressed sympathy to the Government of Guatemala in connection with the recent flooding and mudslides in its country.

4. **Mr. Puja** (Indonesia) recalled that in April 2005, in Bandung, Indonesia, the nations of Asia and Africa had commemorated the golden jubilee of the 1955 Asian-African Conference. That historic conference had given voice to the voiceless and provided a strong boost towards ending colonialism on the two continents. The jubilee commemoration, while laying the foundation for a strategic partnership of peoples who had sent a strong message that colonialism had to be a thing of the past.

5. Indonesia strongly believed that the United Nations had a key role to play in decolonizing the remaining Non-Self-Governing Territories. His delegation shared the view that each situation had special characteristics and there was no universal prescription for decolonization. However, it had to be conceded that the decolonization of the last few Non-Self-Governing Territories was proceeding very slowly, with the exception of Tokelau, where New Zealand, as the administering Power, and Tokelau had developed an exemplary working relationship.

6. Indonesia was encouraged by the innovative approach taken by the Special Committee on Decolonization to progress towards achievable goals, with the overall aim of assisting the people of the remaining Non-Self-Governing Territories in realizing their aspiration of political equality and a full measure of self-government. The Special Committee's visit to Bermuda in February 2005 and the Caribbean Regional Seminar in Saint Vincent and the Grenadines in May 2005 had resulted in a productive exchange of views on the challenges being faced by the people of the Non-Self-Governing Territories and the role that the United Nations might play in the development process. His delegation advocated further cooperation between the Special Committee and the specialized agencies to assist the peoples in preparing for self-determination. Indonesia called upon the administering Powers to show greater commitment to the speedy and unconditional end of colonialism in the remaining Non-Self-Governing Territories, thereby ensuring successful closure to the Special Committee's mandate.

7. **Mr. Shiweva** (Namibia), said that Namibia, as one of the countries that had suffered under colonialism, foreign occupation and domination, strongly commended the Committee for its ongoing important work. While the 2005 World Summit had addressed various aspects of the world economic, security and social situations, it had failed to address the important issue of decolonization. Namibia took the view that where colonialism and foreign occupation existed, there could be no development, no security, and no freedom to live in dignity. The peoples of the Non-Self-Governing Territories therefore deserved special attention and looked to the United Nations for assistance and support.

8. The people of Western Sahara placed high hopes in the Organization, despite more than three decades of continual denial of their inalienable right to self-determination. The General Assembly and the African Union had recognized the inalienable rights of the Saharan people to self-determination and nationhood. The ceasefire proclaimed in September 1991 was still in place, allowing for the implementation of the settlement plan and paving the way for the holding of a free and fair referendum under the auspices of the United Nations. Namibia commended the United Nations Mission for the Referendum in Western Sahara (MINURSO) for its role in monitoring and enforcing the ceasefire agreement and called on the international community to spare no efforts in assisting the parties to advance the peace process. His delegation was

perturbed that delaying tactics were being used and that attempts were being made to legitimize the illegal occupation. Namibia called upon the Government of Morocco to accept and implement the peace plan so as to enable the people of Western Sahara to determine their own future.

9. Namibia also reiterated its support for and solidarity with the Palestinian people in their struggle for self-determination and for the establishment of a sovereign Palestinian State. Finally, his delegation urged that the plan of action for the Second International Decade for the Eradication of Colonialism should be implemented without delay.

10. **Mr. Gebreel** (Libyan Arab Jamahiriya) said that his country had been the first to declare its independence through the United Nations following its own bitter experience of colonialism and that it was consequently well aware of the potential role of the Organization in that regard. While regretting the lack of progress achieved in implementing the plan of action for the Second International Decade for the Eradication of Colonialism, he hoped that the cooperation of New Zealand concerning the Territory of Tokelau would serve as an incentive for other administering Powers to follow suit and provide the financial and technical assistance needed to prepare the peoples in question for autonomy, to which end appropriate legislation and measures to sever colonial ties should be put in place. He further urged the States concerned to stop using the Territories under their administration for military purposes; they should instead safeguard the natural resources in those Territories and compensate their peoples for the consequences of any misuse of their resources and land. Greater effort should also be devoted to enabling peoples under foreign rule to exercise self-determination, in which connection he stressed that the Territory's size, number of inhabitants and volume of resources had no bearing. As for the Palestinian people, the international community was still proving incapable of ending their tragedy, which had now lasted over 50 years, through enforcement of the United Nations resolutions that would enable them to exercise their inalienable right to self-determination and return to their land to establish an independent State. His country supported all efforts to eradicate the last surviving pockets of colonialism and implement the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples. With those two objectives in mind, he appealed for the cooperation of all States with the Committee.

11. **Mr. Loedel** (Uruguay), speaking on behalf of the member States of the Southern Common market (MERCOSUR) — Argentina, Brazil, Paraguay and Uruguay — and the associated States Bolivia, Chile, Colombia, Ecuador, Peru and Venezuela, said that the question of the Malvinas Islands, had been described by both the General Assembly and by the Special Committee on Decolonization as a special and particular colonial question, because the United Kingdom had occupied the islands by force in 1833, expelling their inhabitants and the Argentine authorities established there and replacing them with settlers of British descent. Moreover, in General Assembly resolution 2065 (XX), approved by a large majority, and in many other resolutions, the matter was defined as a dispute between the Governments of Argentina and the United Kingdom concerning sovereignty over the islands, which had to be resolved by way of negotiations between the two States, bearing in mind the provisions and objectives of the Charter of the United Nations and of General Assembly resolution 1514 (XV). Furthermore, General Assembly resolution 2065 (XX) explicitly stated that the two parties had to bear in mind the interests of the population of the Malvinas Islands, which excluded the application of the principle of self-determination.

12. The MERCOSUR member States and associated States fully supported the principle of self-determination, but considered that it was applicable to subjugated peoples, as specified in General Assembly resolution 1514 (XV), but not to the descendants of a non-indigenous population. For that reason, they were in agreement with the draft resolution on the question of the Malvinas adopted by the Special Committee on 15 June 2005, which was fully in line with the rejection by the General Assembly in 1985 of proposals to include the principle of self-determination in the draft resolution on the question of the Malvinas. Meanwhile the principle that was applicable to the issue was the principle of territorial integrity, as laid down in General Assembly resolution 1514 (XV). Lastly, the MERCOSUR countries wished to recall the Declaration on the Malvinas Islands approved at the tenth meeting of the Presidents of MERCOSUR, Bolivia and Chile on 25 June 1996, reaffirming their support for the legitimate rights of the Argentine Republic in the sovereignty dispute and expressing the

hope that the dispute would be resolved promptly, in accordance with the resolutions of the United Nations and of the Organization of American States.

13. **Mr. Koonjul** (Mauritius) recalled that at the 2005 World Summit, world leaders had rededicated themselves to upholding the right to self-determination of people remaining under colonial domination and foreign occupation. The contribution of the United Nations to the decolonization process, especially in Africa, should encourage efforts to ensure that the people of the remaining Non-Self-Governing Territories were able to exercise their right to self-determination in accordance with the Declaration on Decolonization. Mauritius welcomed the cooperation between New Zealand and Tokelau in the preparations for the exercise of the right of self-determination by the people of Tokelau. It encouraged the parties involved in the issues of the Falkland Islands (Malvinas) and Gibraltar to undertake negotiations in good faith to find peaceful and definitive solutions to those issues. It also noted with appreciation the continued progress made, thus far, for the Kanak people in New Caledonia under the Matignon and the Noumea Accords.

14. The struggle for self-determination by the people of Western Sahara had caused tragic loss of life, separation of families and untold misery. It was regrettable that there was still no agreement between the parties on the peace plan. Mauritius urged all the parties to continue to exercise restraint and to refrain from taking any action that could worsen the chances for a peaceful solution. It also stressed the need for full respect for the military agreements reached with MINURSO concerning the ceasefire. Mauritius commended the important role played by MINURSO under difficult circumstances, and supported the Secretary-General's recommendation that the Mission should be maintained. It also welcomed the success of the first phase of the family visits programme. Mauritius considered the release of 400 Moroccan prisoners by the Frente POLISARIO to be an encouraging step, and appealed to the Moroccan authorities to release all Saharan prisoners of war still in detention. It encouraged the Secretary-General and the Security Council to remain resolute in assisting the parties to reach a just, lasting and mutually acceptable political solution.

15. **Mr. Martins** (Angola), recalling that his country's long decolonization process had ultimately succeeded thanks to the efforts of many delegations present in the Committee, said that it was a moral obligation for Angola to contribute to the work of the Committee. Decolonization remained an issue of central importance to which the international community should continue to pay special attention, as had been reiterated at the 2005 World Summit.

16. With regard to the question of Western Sahara, the report of the Secretary-General revealed that no progress had been made in the political sphere since the adoption by the Security Council of resolutions 1495 (2003) and 1541 (2004). The peace plan for the self-determination of the people of Western Sahara had been accepted by the Frente POLISARIO, but, its non-acceptance by one of the parties had resulted in deadlock, a situation that could be changed only by political will and commitment of the parties and the international community. Angola therefore called upon the parties to cooperate with the United Nations, in particular the Security Council, the Secretary-General, and his Personal Envoy.

17. The presence of MINURSO continued to be a clear demonstration of the commitment of the United Nations and the international community, a stabilizing factor and a guarantee for the respect of the ceasefire, as well as a vital tool for confidence-building. For that reason, Angola fully shared the view of the Secretary-General that reducing the size of MINURSO would not be advisable. However, its presence would be productive only if concrete and positive changes occurred in the political process. His delegation commended the release of former Moroccan prisoners by the Frente POLISARIO, and believed that the demand of the Frente POLISARIO for the release of Saharan political prisoners was an issue meriting particular attention. Angola appealed to the international community to continue providing humanitarian assistance to the Saharan people.

18. During the Committee meeting on 7 October 2005, one of the petitioners, the representative of "Freedom for All", had made reference to alleged deportation of Saharan children to Angola, Cuba, Mozambique and the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya by the Frente POLISARIO. That information could only have been fabricated, and constituted a lack of respect to the Committee and an insult to the Government and people of Angola.

19. **Mr. Sow** (Guinea) said that the Special Committee had made significant progress, but there was still much to be done. His delegation supported the idea that the Special Committee and the administering Powers should seize the opportunity offered to them by shifts in the situation of certain Territories to draw up decolonization plans on a case-by-case basis, with participation by representatives of the Non-Self-Governing Territories.

20. His delegation attached particular importance to the question of Western Sahara. While appreciating the progress made in the negotiations between the parties, notably in the area of the release of the last Moroccan prisoners and the first phase of the programme of family visits, it was concerned that the consensus which had always characterized the adoption of resolutions on the matter since 1990 had been broken at the preceding session. His delegation strongly hoped that consensus could be restored, so that the international community could focus all its energy on overcoming the fundamental differences which had become evident in the negotiations and finding a peaceful solution, in line with the interests of the parties concerned and of the African region as a whole. It called on the international community, United Nations bodies, the parties to the conflict and the other countries of the subregion, to make greater efforts with the Personal Envoy of the Secretary-General to find a political, negotiated and mutually acceptable solution to resolve the dispute once and for all.

21. **Mr. Ndiaye** (Gabon) reaffirmed his delegation's strong attachment to the principle of multilateralism and its belief in the central role of the United Nations. He praised the Organization's successful decolonization efforts but appealed for more effective implementation of the relevant resolutions. It would be unfortunate to have to declare a third international decade for the eradication of colonialism after 2011.

22. Midway through the Second International Decade for the Eradication of Colonialism there was still a great need to provide information and training to the Non-Self-Governing Territories in order to enhance their economic and social progress. Gabon supported the establishment of mechanisms to assess the implementation of the recommendations of the General Assembly and the plan of action for the Second Decade.

23. Gabon maintained relations of friendship and cooperation with all the Arab countries in the Maghreb, in particular Morocco and believed that the territorial integrity and sovereignty of the latter must be maintained. It welcomed the Secretary-General's tireless efforts to seek a political solution to the question of Western Sahara and his recent appointment of Mr. van Walsum as his new Personal Envoy. His delegation hoped that Mr. van Walsum's forthcoming visit to the region would inspire the parties to renew dialogue with a view to achieving a lasting and mutually acceptable solution in accordance with Security Council resolution 1598 (2005). As illustrated by the measure of progr s achieved in recent months, full and sincere cooperation among all parties to the conflict and the support of the international community were more necessary than ever in order to overcome the current impasse. His delegation hoped that the individual differences between the parties could be transformed into elements of rapprochement, for the sake of peace and development of the entire Maghreb region and for the benefit of the African Union.

24. **Mr. Wali** (Nigeria) said that support for the implementation of the plan of action for the Second International Decade for the Eradication of Colonialism should be translated into action in order for the 16 remaining Non-Self-Governing Territories to attain their independence by 2010.

25. Nigeria, a strong supporter of the principle of self-determination, opposed any policy that either perpetuated subjugation [...] sought to thwart the enjoyment of sovereign independence. It was therefore concerned at the slow pace of progress in the Western Sahara. Any reduction in the size of MINURSO, particularly its military component, would have a negative impact on the implementation of its mandate and would send the wrong message about the resolve of the international community to support self-determination. His delegation therefore welcomed the Secretary-General's recommendation on the future of MINURSO, contained in his report (A/60/1[...]), and the Security Council's decision, in its resolution 1598 (2005), to extend the Mission's mandate through October. That, however, should not serve as an excuse for postponing action in a situation that demanded an urgent solution. Commending the Government of Algeria for granting asylum to Saharan families and individuals displaced by the conflict, he stressed the need to launch the referendum process as expeditiously

as possible. The African Union had offered its services to facilitate a settlement of the question of Western Sahara, which would enhance peace, security and development in the entire subregion.

26. **Mr. Guterres** (Timor-Leste) expressed his delegation's support for the recommendations contained in the report of the Special Committee on Decolonization (A/60/23). As a member of the Special Committee, Timor-Leste had had an opportunity to participate in the visiting mission to Bermuda and to learn about the hopes and concerns of the Bermudan people.

27. His delegation welcomed the progress achieved in a number of Territories administered by the United Kingdom, as well as in Tokelau and in New Caledonia. It appealed for the continuation of bilateral or multilateral negotiations on Gibraltar and the Falklands (Malvinas).

28. His delegation welcomed the Secretary-General's efforts to implement Security Council resolutions on Western Sahara, and the continuing commitment of the Government of Morocco and Frente POLISARIO leaders to maintain the ceasefire. It praised the Frente POLISARIO for the release of the remaining Moroccan prisoners of war and appealed to the Government of Morocco to reciprocate. It concurred with the Secretary-General that MINURSO should not be downsized and believed that the Baker Plan remained the best possible option for achieving a political solution in the region. Timor-Leste urged the Secretary-General and his Personal Envoy, Mr. van Walsum, to continue their efforts to find a lasting settlement.

29. Commending the work of the 2005 Caribbean regional seminar, held in St. Vincent and the Grenadines, he said that Timor-Leste would like to host the 2006 Pacific regional seminar, in gratitude for the Special Committee's efforts for the people of Timor-Leste over more than two decades.

30. **Mr. Al-Zayani** (Bahrain) reviewed the resolutions and declarations that had been adopted over the years with a view to ending colonialism and lamented the failure to implement the plan of action of the First International Decade for the Eradication of Colonialism. In view of its importance to the people still under colonial rule, his delegation hoped that the Second International Decade for the Eradication of Colonialism would be the final such Decade.

31. **Mr. Kafando** (Burkina Faso) said that, on the sixtieth anniversary of the United Nations, decolonization was more relevant than ever. Its achievements and the increase in its membership demonstrated that the Special Committee on Decolonization remained the most effective framework for implementing the Declaration. He hoped that the Second International Decade for the Eradication of Colonialism would be the last, but dialogue and cooperation between administering Powers and Non-Self-Governing Territories would be necessary to achieve that end.

32. His delegation welcomed the January and April reports of the Secretary-General on the question of Western Sahara and the adoption of Security Council resolution 1598 (2005). Hailing the release of Moroccan political prisoners, he noted that, ultimately, the fate of Western Sahara depended on the willingness of all parties concerned to cooperate fully with United Nations initiatives to attain a just and lasting political solution.

33. **Mr. Laki** (Uganda) said that the world could not claim to be civilized as long as some peoples were denied their right to self-determination. His delegation supported reform of the United Nations, including elimination of the Special Committee on Decolonization upon the completion of its mandate. He called for the accelerated settlement of the question of Western Sahara, and applauded the release of Moroccan prisoners of war by Frente POLISARIO. It was now up to Morocco to reciprocate.

34. **Mr. Badji** (Senegal) said that the question of Western Sahara was of special importance to Senegal, as it had common borders with Morocco and Algeria, two brotherly countries with whom it had maintained relations for centuries. Welcoming the Secretary-General's determination to help those two countries reach a just, lasting and mutually acceptable political solution, he urged all parties to pursue negotiations to that end and to create a climate of confidence that would dissipate misunderstandings and tension. It was vital to maintain the status quo by preserving the ceasefire in accordance with paragraphs 4 and 15 of the report of the Secretary-General — particularly as the successful monitoring of the ceasefire by MINURSO was a stabilizing and confidence-building factor — and to address humanitarian issues with the invaluable help of the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC).

35. His delegation welcomed the release of the Moroccan prisoners of war by Frente POLISARIO. It cautioned, however, that humanitarian questions should not serve as a pretext to minimize the importance of any future settlement plan. The fate of remaining prisoners and those reported as missing must continue to be a matter of concern for the United Nations. Senegal welcomed the appointment of the new Personal Envoy of the Secretary-General.

36. While reaffirming the need to maintain the territorial integrity and sovereignty of Morocco, he expressed his delegation's support for all initiatives aimed at attaining a just and lasting solution to the question of Western Sahara, for the benefit of all the peoples and countries of the subregion. That position was based on Senegal's views in favour of the full implementation of the relevant Security Council resolutions and the search for a political solution to the conflict through dialogue and negotiations under the auspices of the United Nations, its long-standing political and economic ties with Morocco and its desire to maintain friendly relations with all the countries of the Arab Maghreb. Settlement of the question of Western Sahara was crucial not only because it would enable Morocco to rejoin the African Union, but also because it would help to stabilize the Maghreb, which increasingly had to deal with the threat of cross-border terrorism.

37. The attainment of a just political solution depended in large part on the political will of all those involved. His delegation urged the Secretary-General to persevere in the implementation of confidence-building measures between the Parties. In conclusion, he expressed the fervent hope that the draft resolution on the question of Western Sahara would be adopted by consensus, in keeping with tradition. That would send a strong positive signal on the eve of the Personal Envoy's trip to the subregion.

38. **Mr. Maema** (Lesotho) said that halfway through the Second International Decade for the Eradication of Colonialism, progress was very slow. The Members of the United Nations had to ponder whether there was enough political will to complete the decolonization agenda.

39. The denial of the right to self-determination of the Saharan people must be urgently addressed, and the sentiment expressed by fellow Africans, that the liberation of the continent would be complete only when Western Sahara gained its independence, must be heeded. He noted with appreciation that the Secretary-General had reiterated his commitment to the achievement of a mutually acceptable political solution to the question of Western Sahara. The United Nations must redouble its efforts to break the current deadlock.

40. **Mr. Bennouna** (Morocco) said that instead of having to discuss the question of Sahara once again in the Committee, his delegation would have preferred to engage in negotiations to advance towards a mutually acceptable political solution, in accordance with Security Council resolution 1598 (2005). His Government had stated many times that it was prepared to enter into such negotiations. The continuation of the dispute had unfortunately hampered cooperation among the countries of the Maghreb and their integration within the Maghreb Arab Union.

41. Negotiations should begin as soon as possible, and should focus on a compromise solution and a common denominator, namely, the elaboration of a statute of autonomy that would enable the entire population to manage its own affairs, in full respect for the Kingdom of Morocco's prerogatives of sovereignty. Nothing could justify the refusal to sit around the negotiating table and seek a mutually acceptable political solution; such refusal could only derive from the desire to perpetuate an antagonistic situation, from which certain parties appeared to be deriving undisclosed benefits. Moreover, under international law and the Charter of the United Nations, all parties to a dispute were required to strive for a peaceful settlement through direct negotiations. Morocco was prepared to undertake that process at any time, under the auspices of the United Nations, and hoped that Algeria would do the same, in order to fulfil their shared responsibilities to the peoples of the Maghreb.

42. In order to regain consensus within the Committee, Morocco had proposed to update the 2003 resolution, stressing the divergent reactions of the parties to the second plan proposed by the former Personal Envoy of the Secretary-General. Obviously, the international community could not have given any support to that plan if it had not been agreed to by the parties, and the disagreement between the parties had been duly noted in official documents of the United Nations. Political practice within the United Nations, not to mention intellectual honesty, had finally led to Morocco's legitimate demands being taken into account. It had now been clearly established that the

second plan had become obsolete, leaving the new Personal Envoy free to ascertain the positions of the parties with regard to a compromise political solution.

43. Morocco, which had been partially decolonized in 1956, after being divided among several European Powers at the beginning of the 20th century, had since then constantly endeavoured to achieve national unity in order to enable the entire Moroccan people to exercise their right of self-determination throughout the national territory. Thus, through successive negotiations with Spain, it had been able to regain the territories of Tarfaya, Sidi Ifni and Sahara, which had been under Spanish colonization. Since then, Morocco had spared no effort to settle the dispute with Algeria over the Sahara. His Government had accepted the first plan proposed by the former Personal Envoy, but that plan had been categorically rejected by Algeria. On principle, however, Morocco had not been able to accept the partition of the territory as proposed to Mr. Baker by Algeria on 2 November 2001. His Government had also objected to the second plan proposed by Mr. Baker in 2003, because it departed from the concept of a political solution founded on autonomy, a concept which had been defined by the Personal Envoy himself and had been at the origin of Morocco's commitment to the entire process. Obviously a solution that was not mutually acceptable had no chance of success. Morocco could therefore not understand the obstinacy of Algeria in supporting a plan that lacked validity because it had not been agreed to by the parties.

44. Morocco wished to thank all the parties that had assisted in the settlement of the humanitarian aspects of the Sahara dispute. It welcomed the recent release of Moroccan prisoners held at Tindouf in Algerian territory, but would continue to demand that justice should be done, the perpetrators of war crimes should be prosecuted, victims should be compensated and the fate of hundreds of Moroccans who had disappeared should be clarified. It would also continue to call for a census of Moroccan civilians held hostage at Tindouf to be conducted by the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR). He stressed his Government's desire for the dispute imposed on it to come to an end, in order to pave the way for a new era of cooperation and construction in the Maghreb that would strengthen and enhance unity in the subregion and throughout the African continent.

45. **The Chairman** invited the Committee to take action on the draft resolutions and draft decision relating to agenda items 76, 34, 35, 36 and 37.

Draft resolution I, Information from Non-Self-Governing Territories transmitted under Article 73 e of the Charter of the United Nations (A/60/23, chap. VII, sect. A)

46. **The Chairman** said that the Secretariat had informed him that draft resolution I had no financial implications.

47. *A recorded vote was taken.*

In favour:

Algeria, Andorra, Angola, Antigua and Barbuda, Argentina, Armenia, Australia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Belarus, Belgium, Brazil, Brunei Darussalam, Bulgaria, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cambodia, Cameroon, Canada, China, Colombia, Congo, Costa Rica, Côte d'Ivoire, Croatia, Cuba, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Djibouti, Dominica, Egypt, El Salvador, Eritrea, Estonia, Ethiopia, Fiji, Finland, Gabon, Georgia, Germany, Greece, Guatemala, Guinea, Honduras, Hungary, India, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Iraq, Ireland, Italy, Jamaica, Japan, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Kuwait, Kyrgyzstan, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Latvia, Lebanon, Liberia, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Madagascar, Malaysia, Maldives, Mali, Malta, Mexico, Morocco, Mozambique, Myanmar, Namibia, Nepal, Netherlands, New Zealand, Nicaragua, Nigeria, Norway, Oman, Pakistan, Panama, Papua New Guinea, Paraguay, Peru, Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Qatar, Republic of Korea, Republic of Moldova, Romania, Russian Federation, Saint Lucia, San Marino, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Serbia and Montenegro, Singapore, Slovakia, Slovenia, South Africa, Spain, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Suriname, Swaziland, Sweden, Switzerland, Syrian Arab Republic, Thailand, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Timor-Leste, Tunisia, Turkey, Uganda, Ukraine, United Arab Emirates, United Republic of Tanzania, Uruguay, Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of), Viet Nam, Yemen, Zambia, Zimbabwe.

Against:

None.

Abstaining:

France, Israel, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America.

48. *Draft resolution I was adopted by 130 votes to none, with 4 abstentions.*

49. **Mr. Williams** (United Kingdom) said that, as in previous years, his country had abstained in the vote on the draft resolution. It did not take issue with the main objective of the resolution, which was to seek compliance with Article 73 *e* of the Charter of the United Nations, and would continue to meet its obligations fully in that regard with respect to the United Kingdom Overseas Territories. However, his Government believed that the decision as to whether a Non-Self-Governing Territory had reached a level of self-government sufficient to release the administering Power from the obligation to transmit information under Article 73 *e* of the Charter fell to the Government of the Territory and the administering Power concerned, and not to the General Assembly.

Draft resolution II: Economic and other activities that affect the interests of the peoples of the Non-Self-Governing Territories (A/60/23, chap. XII, sect. B)

50. **The Chairman** said that the Secretariat had informed him that draft resolution II had no financial implications.

51. *A recorded vote was taken.*

In favour:

Algeria, Andorra, Angola, Antigua and Barbuda, Argentina, Armenia, Australia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Belarus, Belgium, Botswana, Brazil, Brunei Darussalam, Bulgaria, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cambodia, Cameroon, Canada, Chile, China, Colombia, Congo, Costa Rica, Côte d'Ivoire, Croatia, Cuba, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Djibouti, Dominica, Egypt, El Salvador, Eritrea, Estonia, Ethiopia, Fiji, Finland, Gabon, Georgia, Germany, Greece, Guatemala, Guinea, Honduras, Hungary, India, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Iraq, Ireland, Italy, Jamaica, Japan, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Kuwait, Kyrgyzstan, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Latvia, Lebanon, Lesotho, Liberia, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Madagascar, Malaysia, Maldives, Mali, Malta, Mauritania, Mauritius, Mexico, Morocco, Mozambique, Myanmar, Namibia, Nepal, Netherlands, New Zealand, Nicaragua, Niger, Nigeria, Norway, Oman, Pakistan, Panama, Papua New Guinea, Paraguay, Peru, Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Qatar, Republic of Korea, Republic of Moldova, Romania, Russian Federation, Saint Lucia, San Marino, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Serbia and Montenegro, Singapore, Slovakia, Slovenia, South Africa, Spain, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Suriname, Swaziland, Sweden, Switzerland, Syrian Arab Republic, Thailand, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Timor-Leste, Togo, Tunisia, Turkey, Uganda, Ukraine, United Arab Emirates, United Republic of Tanzania, Uruguay, Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of), Viet Nam, Yemen, Zambia, Zimbabwe.

Against:

Israel, United States of America.

Abstaining:

France, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland.

52. *Draft resolution II was adopted by 137 votes to 2, with 2 abstentions.*

53. **Mr. Desmoures** (Argentina) said that his delegation believed that draft resolution II must be interpreted and implemented in conformity with the relevant General Assembly resolutions on decolonization, particularly resolutions 2065 (XX) and 31/49 and subsequent resolutions on the question of the Malvinas.

Draft resolution III: Implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples by the specialized agencies and the international institutions associated with the United Nations (A/60/23, chap. XII, sect. C)

54. **The Chairman** said that the Secretariat had informed him that draft resolution III had no financial implications.

55. **Ms. Joseph** (Saint Lucia) said that in paragraph 13 of draft resolution III, the word "reiterated" should be replaced by "noted".

56. *A recorded vote was taken.*

In favour:

Algeria, Angola, Antigua and Barbuda, Argentina, Australia, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Belarus, Botswana, Brazil, Brunei Darussalam, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cambodia, Cameroon, Chile, China, Colombia, Congo, Costa Rica, Côte d'Ivoire, Cuba, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Djibouti, Dominica, Egypt, El Salvador, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Fiji, Gabon, Ghana, Guatemala, Guinea, Honduras, India, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Iraq, Jamaica, Jordan, Kyrgyzstan, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Lebanon, Lesotho, Liberia, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Madagascar, Malaysia, Maldives, Mali, Mauritius, Mexico, Morocco, Mozambique, Myanmar, Namibia, Nepal, New Zealand, Nicaragua, Nigeria, Oman, Pakistan, Panama, Papua New Guinea, Paraguay, Peru, Philippines, Qatar, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Singapore, South Africa, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Suriname, Swaziland, Syrian Arab Republic, Thailand, Timor-Leste, Togo, Tunisia, Uganda, United Arab Emirates, United Republic of Tanzania, Uruguay, Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of), Viet Nam, Yemen, Zambia, Zimbabwe.

Against:

None.

Abstaining:

Andorra, Armenia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Belgium, Bulgaria, Canada, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Estonia, Finland, France, Georgia, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Japan, Kazakhstan, Latvia, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Monaco, Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Republic of Korea, Republic of Moldova, Romania, Russian Federation, San Marino, Serbia and Montenegro, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Turkey, Ukraine, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America.

57. *Draft resolution III, as orally amended, was adopted by 93 votes to none, with 49 abstentions.*

58. **Mr. Desmoares** (Argentina) said that his delegation had voted in favour of draft resolution III. However, paragraphs 12, 13 and 14 must be interpreted, as in the past, within the context of the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC). The participation of associate members of regional commissions in various United Nations meetings must be guided by the rules of procedure of the General Assembly and its resolutions on decolonization, particularly those related to specific Territories; only current associate members of regional commissions, ECLAC in particular, could participate in such activities. Territories that were subject to a sovereignty dispute, recognized by the United Nations in its resolutions, should under no circumstances be allowed such participation.

59. **Mr. Thomson** (United Kingdom), speaking on behalf of the European Union, said that the Member States of the European Union reaffirmed their support for the specialized agencies in their efforts to offer assistance to Non-Self-Governing Territories in the humanitarian, technical and educational fields. However, the statutes of those agencies must be carefully respected, and for that reason, the European Union had again abstained in the vote on the draft resolution.

Draft resolution A/C.4/60/L.2: Offers by Member States of study and training facilities for inhabitants of Non-Self-Governing Territories

60. **The Chairman** said that the Secretariat had informed him that draft resolution A/C.4/60/L.2 had no financial implications. The Syrian Arab Republic had become a sponsor of the draft resolution.

61. *Draft resolution A/C.4/60/L.2 was adopted.*

62. **The Chairman** said that the Secretariat had informed him that the draft resolutions under agenda item 26 had neither regular budget nor programme budget implications.

Draft resolution A/C.4/60/L.4, Question of Western Sahara

63. *Draft resolution A/C.4/60/L.4 was adopted.*

64. **Mr. Williams** (United Kingdom), speaking on behalf of the European Union, the acceding countries Bulgaria and Romania; the candidate countries Turkey and Croatia; the countries of the stabilization and association process Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Serbia and Montenegro and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia; and, in addition, Iceland,

Liechtenstein and Norway, as well as Ukraine and Moldova, said that the European Union welcomed the fact that the draft resolution on the question of Western Sahara had been presented as a proposal of the Chairman, and had been adopted by consensus. It supported efforts to find a just, lasting and mutually acceptable political solution which would allow for the self-determination of the people of Western Sahara, as envisaged by the Security Council. The European Union continued to encourage the parties to work towards such a solution, within the framework of the United Nations, and to work with the Secretary-General's Personal Envoy, Mr. Peter Van Walsum and the Special Representative of the Secretary-General and Chief of MINURSO, Mr. Francesco Bastagli. The European Union paid tribute to MINURSO and its role in the peace process.

65. The European Union remained concerned about the humanitarian aspects of the conflict, welcomed the release of 404 Moroccan prisoners of war by the Frente POLISARIO in August, and urged all parties to take concrete measures within their area of responsibility to resolve the remaining humanitarian issues linked to the conflict. Both parties should continue to cooperate with the efforts of ICRC concerning all the people unaccounted for since the beginning of the conflict, and collaborate with UNHCR in implementing confidence-building measures. The European Union was convinced that progress on those issues could help to improve the atmosphere for the political process.

66. **Mr. Baali** (Algeria) welcomed the adoption by consensus of draft resolution A/C.4/60/L.4. His delegation was pleased that the international community had solemnly reiterated that the conflict in Western Sahara was a question of decolonization which fell under General Assembly resolution 1514 (XV) and must be resolved through the exercise by the people of Western Sahara of their inalienable right of self-determination. It also welcomed the continued unanimous support of the international community for the settlement plan and for the peace plan for self-determination of the people of Western Sahara. In underlining that the parties had reacted differently to the peace plan, the international community was recognizing that the Frente POLISARIO had officially accepted the plan, whereas Morocco had formally rejected it, thereby assuming full responsibility for the impasse in the peace process. His delegation was pleased that the General Assembly had reaffirmed the responsibility of the United Nations towards the people of Western Sahara, and, in calling upon the parties to release without further delay all persons held since the start of the conflict, was calling upon Morocco to release the hundreds of prisoners of war and political detainees who were still in Moroccan prisons and whose families had had no news for years.

67. Since the Frente POLISARIO had released all the prisoners of war previously held, the international community expected Morocco to fulfil its obligations under international humanitarian law, put an end to the ill-treatment of political detainees, particularly those arrested during the recent nationalist demonstrations, and accept and implement the peace plan, which remained the optimal political solution for a just and final settlement of the conflict. The forthcoming visit to the region of the Secretary-General's Personal Envoy would give Morocco an opportunity to return to international legality by accepting a referendum on self-determination, which was the fairest and most democratic means of settling an issue of decolonization.

68. **Mr. Bennouna** (Morocco) said that on 9 April 2004, Morocco had informed the Personal Envoy of the Secretary-General of its objections to all aspects of the peace plan which departed from the concept introduced by the Personal Envoy in 2000 and based on autonomy, with respect for the sovereign rights of Morocco. The other parties had pretended to accept the plan, while expressing reservations on certain substantive aspects. It was in view of that situation that his delegation had reached agreement with the representative of Algeria to include in draft resolution A/C.4/60/L.4 the clear and unambiguous text of paragraph 3. That paragraph made it clear that the parties were in disagreement about the plan, and in the absence of such agreement, the plan continued to be a text drawn up by the former Personal Envoy by which no party was bound. When the newly appointed Personal Envoy arrived in the region, Algeria should not close the door to peace by insisting on the implementation of a defunct plan.

Draft decision A/C.4/60/L.3: Question of Gibraltar

69. *Draft decision A/C.4/60/L.3 was adopted.*

Draft resolution IV: Question of New Caledonia
(A/60/23, chap. XII, sect. D)

70. *Draft resolution IV was adopted.*

Draft resolution VI: Questions of American Samoa, Anguilla, Bermuda, the British Virgin Islands, the Cayman Islands, Montserrat, Pitcairn, St. Helena, the Turks and Caicos Islands and the United States Virgin Islands (A/60/23, chap. XII, sect. F)

71. *Draft resolution VI was adopted.*

72. **Mr. Desmoures** (Argentina) recalled that, in accordance with the plan of action for the Second International Decade for the Eradication of Colonialism, seminars on decolonization could be held only in the Pacific and Caribbean regions and at United Nations Headquarters. The phrase "and other venues" in the twenty-first preambular paragraph of section A of draft resolution VI was therefore inaccurate and inconsistent with the plan of action.

73. With regard to paragraph 2 of section A, his Government reiterated its full support for the right to self-determination of peoples still under colonial domination and foreign occupation, in accordance with General Assembly resolutions 1514 (XV) and 2625 (XXV). At the same time, it wished to stress that the reference to self-determination in that paragraph was restricted to the Territories mentioned in the draft resolution. Both the General Assembly and the Special Committee on Decolonization recognized that there were colonial Territories to which self-determination did not apply owing to the existence of a dispute over sovereignty. For example, in the special colonial situation in the Malvinas, the principle of territorial integrity should apply, so as to prevent any attempt to disrupt the national unity and territorial integrity of Argentina. That accorded with General Assembly resolutions 1514 (XV) and 2065 (XX), as well as subsequent resolutions on the question adopted by the General Assembly and the Special Committee.

74. **Mr. Oyarzun** (Spain) said that Spain had joined the consensus on the draft resolution, and supported the application of the principle of self-determination to the Territories included in the omnibus resolution. At the same time, it considered that the principle of self-determination was not the only relevant principle in carrying out the decolonization of the Non-Self-Governing Territories. There were cases, such as Gibraltar, in which the principle of territorial integrity should be applied, in accordance with various resolutions of the General Assembly.

75. **Mr. Williams** (United Kingdom) said that, as in previous years, his delegation had joined the consensus on the draft resolution, reflecting its full support for the right of self-determination as set out in Article 1, paragraph 2, of the Charter and in paragraph 4 of the Millennium Declaration. At the same time, the language used, particularly in the paragraphs referring to the United Kingdom's Overseas Territories, was inaccurate and inappropriate and his delegation's proposed amendments had not been incorporated. His delegation would have to reconsider whether to support the resolution in future.

Draft resolution VII: Dissemination of information on decolonization (A/60/23, chap. XII, sect. G)

76. *A recorded vote was taken.*

In favour:

Algeria, Andorra, Angola, Antigua and Barbuda, Argentina, Armenia, Australia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Belarus, Belgium, Belize, Botswana, Brazil, Brunei Darussalam, Bulgaria, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cambodia, Cameroon, Canada, Chad, Chile, China, Colombia, Congo, Costa Rica, Côte d'Ivoire, Croatia, Cuba, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Djibouti, Dominica, Ecuador, Egypt, El Salvador, Eritrea, Estonia, Ethiopia, Fiji, Finland, Gabon, Georgia, Germany, Ghana, Greece, Guatemala, Guinea, Guyana, Honduras, Hungary, Iceland, India, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Iraq, Ireland, Italy, Jamaica, Japan, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Kuwait, Kyrgyzstan, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Latvia, Lebanon, Lesotho, Liberia, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Madagascar, Malawi, Malaysia, Maldives, Mali, Malta, Mauritius, Mexico, Monaco, Morocco, Mozambique, Myanmar, Namibia, Nepal, Netherlands, New Zealand, Nicaragua, Nigeria, Norway, Oman, Pakistan, Panama, Papua New Guinea, Paraguay, Peru, Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Qatar, Republic of Korea, Republic of Moldova, Romania, Russian Federation, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, San Marino, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Serbia and Montenegro, Singapore, Slovakia, Slovenia, South Africa, Spain, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Suriname, Swaziland, Sweden, Switzerland, Syrian Arab Republic, Thailand, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Timor-Leste, Togo, Tunisia, Turkey,

Uganda, Ukraine, United Arab Emirates, United Republic of Tanzania, Uruguay, Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of), Yemen, Zambia

Against:

Israel, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America

Abstaining:

France

77. *Draft resolution VIII was adopted by 142 votes to 3, with 1 abstention.*

78. **Mr. Williams** (United Kingdom) said that his Government remained of the view that the obligation placed by the draft resolution on the Secretariat to publicize decolonization issues represented an unwarranted drain on the scarce resources of the United Nations for which reason his delegation had voted against the resolution.

Draft resolution VIII: Implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples (A/60/23, chap. XII, sect. II)

79. *A recorded vote was taken.*

In favour:

Algeria, Andorra, Angola, Antigua and Barbuda, Argentina, Armenia, Australia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Belarus, Belize, Botswana, Brazil, Brunei Darussalam, Bulgaria, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cambodia, Cameroon, Canada, Chad, Chile, China, Colombia, Congo, Costa Rica, Côte d'Ivoire, Croatia, Cuba, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Djibouti, Dominica, Ecuador, Egypt, El Salvador, Eritrea, Estonia, Ethiopia, Fiji, Finland, Gabon, Georgia, Ghana, Greece, Guatemala, Guinea, Guyana, Honduras, Hungary, Iceland, India, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Iraq, Ireland, Italy, Jamaica, Japan, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Kuwait, Kyrgyzstan, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Latvia, Lebanon, Lesotho, Liberia, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Madagascar, Malawi, Malaysia, Maldives, Mali, Malta, Mauritania, Mauritius, Mexico, Monaco, Morocco, Mozambique, Myanmar, Namibia, Nepal, Netherlands, New Zealand, Nicaragua, Nigeria, Norway, Oman, Pakistan, Panama, Papua New Guinea, Paraguay, Peru, Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Qatar, Republic of Korea, Republic of Moldova, Romania, Russian Federation, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, San Marino, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Serbia and Montenegro, Singapore, Slovakia, Slovenia, South Africa, Spain, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Suriname, Swaziland, Sweden, Switzerland, Syrian Arab Republic, Thailand, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Timor-Leste, Togo, Tunisia, Turkey, Ukraine, United Arab Emirates, United Republic of Tanzania, Uruguay, Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of), Viet Nam, Yemen, Zambia

Against:

Israel, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America

Abstaining:

Belgium, France, Germany

80. *Draft resolution VIII was adopted by 147 votes to 3, with 3 abstentions.*

81. **Mr. Williams** (United Kingdom) said that his Government continued to find some elements of the resolution unacceptable and had again voted against it. Despite having voted negatively on the current and other resolutions, the United Kingdom remained committed to maintaining its relationship with the Overseas Territories, while taking fully into account the views of the peoples of the Territories.

Right of reply

82. **Mr. Williams** (United Kingdom), speaking in exercise of the right of reply in relation to comments made at the current meeting by Uruguay on behalf of MERCOSUR and those made the previous day by Venezuela and on both days by other delegations, said that the United Kingdom's position on the Falkland Islands was well known and had last been set out by the United Kingdom's Permanent Representative to the United Nations in a written right of reply to a statement made by the President of Argentina at the High-level plenary session of the General Assembly on 14 September 2005. The United Kingdom had no doubts concerning its sovereignty over the Falkland Islands, and there could be no negotiation on the matter until the residents of the islands so wished.

The meeting rose at 11 a.m.